

Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project

Adaptive Management Oversight Committee

Standard Operating Procedure

Title: Road-kill Salvage

Number: 9.0

File Name: MW SOP 09.Road-kill Salvage.Final.20070117.doc

Purpose: The purpose of this SOP is to ensure efficient and safe collection of road-killed carcasses, without jeopardizing criminal investigations or causing unnecessary call-outs of Arizona Wildlife Managers or New Mexico Conservation Officers (hereinafter generically referred to as Wildlife Officers unless otherwise stated). Furthermore, this SOP has been established to ensure that cervids from areas known to contain animals infected with Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) are not used as supplemental wolf food, and cervids potentially infected with CWD are not transported across state or county lines or to uninfected areas within a state. These constraints are intended to prevent the Reintroduction Project from contributing to spread of CWD. This SOP supersedes relevant sections of the 1998 Mexican Wolf Interagency Management Plan (USFWS 1998), and therefore represents, in part, the “Service Approved Management Plan” referenced in the Mexican Wolf Final Rule (50 CFR 17.84(k)).

Exceptions: Individual deer and elk carcasses may be salvaged and used for Mexican wolf food, prior to testing, only within the County of origin and only under the following circumstances: 1) No positive tests for CWD have been obtained from within the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area; and 2) The distance of relocation of the elk or deer carcass from the location of the road-kill to the feeding site is within the distance that a live elk or deer could reasonably be expected to move on their own.

Due to presence of CWD, deer and elk carcasses from the following NMDGF Game Management Units (GMUs) may not be used as wolf food: 18, 19, 20, 34, and 36. Please reference current NMDGF GMU Maps (available at <http://www/wildlife.state.nm.us/>) for relevant boundaries.

Background: Collecting road-killed ungulates helps provide a ready supply of native prey for wolves held in acclimation pens and for supplemental feeding of wolves immediately post-release. However, before road-killed elk and deer are collected, the carcass must be cleared of any suspected criminal poaching activity. Depending on the situation, some road-killed ungulates must be examined by a Wildlife Officer before they can be processed. Some road kills are reported at locations distant from duty stations for the IFT and other agency personnel dispatched to pick them up. Therefore, it is imperative to gather accurate location information to reduce chances of personnel going to the wrong location. It is also important for pick-up personnel to use official vehicles and to be in uniform, to eliminate erroneous reports of unauthorized people collecting road-kills. These reports assume a possible poaching incident and require unnecessary call-out of Wildlife Officers and involvement of other regional staff.

Note: CWD is a significant concern to wildlife management agencies and the public. Information on CWD and prophylactic measures to ensure minimizing spread and impacts of CWD is evolving rapidly. All road-kill salvage activities in this Project shall be conducted in a manner that does not contribute to spreading CWD, or exacerbating its impacts within an area of present occurrence.

AGFD, NMDGF, and WMAT shall be consulted by the IFT as necessary to ensure compliance with appropriate agency-specific CWD protocols. Deer, elk, or other native ungulate carcasses salvaged for use as supplemental food for released or other wild Mexican wolves shall be used only in the County of origin, unless the salvaged carcass has tested negative for presence of CWD, in which case the salvaged meat may be used only within the State of origin (see also SOP 8.0, Supplemental Feeding). In addition, salvaged wildlife carcasses shall not be transported from one State to the other in this Project. This interstate transport ban was instituted after CWD was documented in mule deer in New Mexico, and is intended to help ensure the Project does not contribute to spread of CWD.

Procedures:

1. Both AGFD and NMDGF have authorized the Project to collect road-killed carcasses, although each agency has different conditions of authorization. To obtain clearance to pick up carcasses, the following procedures must be followed:
 - a. Arizona on non-tribal lands:
 - i. For clearance to pick up a road-kill, Project personnel will call the appropriate Wildlife Manager (see SOP 0.C for contact information). If the Wildlife Manager is not available, leave a message on their answering machine and then call Radio Dispatch (see SOP 0.C for contact information) for referral to someone who will act on behalf of the Wildlife Manager, and decide whether to investigate the scene for law enforcement purposes, or clear the scene immediately for carcass salvage. Do not assume that a person who reported a carcass to the Project cleared its salvage with a Wildlife Manager.
 - ii. For road-kills salvaged or otherwise noted in Arizona, submit a “Wildlife Vehicle Collision Report (Appendix A) to the AGFD Region 1 (Pinetop) Office.
 - b. In Arizona on White Mountain Apache Tribal lands, call WMAT Radio Dispatch at (928) 338-1023 or 338-4385.
 - c. In New Mexico:
 - i. Project personnel may salvage road-killed javelina, mule deer, white-tailed deer, pronghorn, and elk, provided that:
 - (1) They contact the appropriate Conservation Officer (see SOP 0.C for contact information) prior to disturbing the scene, to ensure that the Conservation Officer has the opportunity to decide whether to investigate the scene for law enforcement purposes, or clear it immediately for carcass salvage. If the Conservation Officer is not available, leave a message on their answering machine and then call Radio Dispatch (see SOP 0.C for contact information) for referral to someone who will act on behalf of the Conservation Officer. Do not assume that a person who reported a carcass to the Project cleared its salvage with a Conservation Officer.
 - (2) Accurate information pertaining to the location and date of salvage is attached to each white-tailed deer and javelina salvaged.
 - (3) Possession of cervids (mule deer, white-tailed deer, and elk) is immediately reported (i.e. before transport) to NMDGF at (505) 476-8080.
 - (4) NMDGF is notified [(505) 476-8040 or (505) 476-8035] within one day regarding any salvage of white-tailed deer or javelina, prior to disposing of these specimens.
 - ii. To contain and prevent spread of CWD, ungulate carcasses must remain in the County of origin, unless NMDGF authorizes differently.

2. Get specific location information before departing for follow-up:
 - a. Highway mile marker
 - b. Distance and direction to nearest town
 - c. Which side of the road (North/South, East/West)
 - d. Species and sex
 - e. GPS coordinates, if possible
3. Pack the correct equipment:
 - a. Sharp knife
 - b. Pulaski, ax, or meat saw
 - c. Sampling equipment
 - d. Heavy duty rubber gloves
 - e. Rope or tow strap
 - f. Electric or crank winch or a come-along
 - g. Flashlight or flood light
4. Always travel with a radio and/or cell phone on to be available to receive information or to communicate with the appropriate local Wildlife Officer or Regional Office.
5. When arriving at the site, make sure your vehicle is pulled off the roadway as much as possible and take all other appropriate safety precautions to ensure that no Project staff are injured or cause injury to others. If it is not safe or feasible to park next to the road kill, proceed to the nearest safe location. If anything appears suspicious, record the license plates, a description of the person(s) and vehicle(s), and then leave the scene and immediately call the appropriate local Wildlife Officer, Regional Office, or Radio Dispatch with the information.
6. If the person who struck the animal wants to keep it:
 - a. In Arizona, the person must obtain a salvage permit from any AGFD Wildlife Manager, Sheriff's Deputy, or Department of Public Service Officer (Highway Patrol).
 - b. In New Mexico, the person must purchase the carcass from a NMDGF Conservation Officer before moving the carcass.
 - c. Do not get into a confrontation over possession of a road kill. If a person contests possession, advise them of the legal requirements and obligations, withdraw from the situation, and immediately refer the case to the appropriate agency office.
7. Carefully inspect the area around the carcass to ensure there has been no contamination by oil, gasoline, anti-freeze, etc.
8. If it is unsafe or inconvenient to quarter the road kill on site, move it to a better spot or winch it into the pickup bed and transport it to a safe location.
9. To make the carcass easier to move and transport, remove the entrails and cut it into 5 to 7 parts, depending on its size. Smaller deer can be processed for transport by cutting off all legs, leaving the head on the torso as one piece. With larger elk, all four legs must be removed, the head separated from the chest, and the chest separated from the hips. Young elk calves and deer fawns can sometimes be handled whole.

10. Do not leave entrails on the roadside in plain view of the public, or where they might cause additional road-kill of prey of wolves or other scavenging species. Remove the entrails to a remote location out of view of public roads.
11. When transporting the ungulate parts, ensure that they are out of view of the public (e.g. below the rails of a pickup bed, inside an enclosed vehicle or truck camper, under a tarp).
12. Transport the road-kill to a walk-in freezer at the AGFD Sipe Wildlife Area, USFWS Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge, or TESH Ladder Ranch. Record the specimen information in the appropriate IFT log. Deposit the road-kill in the freezer according to the instructions for that salvage freezer. **Note: except as noted above under Exceptions, salvaged meat may not be used as wolf food until and unless CWD test results are received and indicate no presence of the disease.**
13. Freezer care:
 - a. When applicable (e.g. Sipe Wildlife Area Freezer), exchange the drain can hanging from the freezer unit for an empty one, to prevent overflow. Overflow will freeze the first layer of carcasses to the floor. Place the frozen drain can outside the building to thaw and drain.
 - b. Clean up any blood, hair, etc. around the freezer and on the freezer floor.
 - c. Make sure the freezer door is shut tight.
14. Testing, collection, and handling of CWD samples will be set by following each lead agency's CWD guidelines/protocols. Agency personnel salvaging road-kill will follow the guidelines/protocols of the state or tribal agency in which they are collecting. The IFT will coordinate with each of the lead agencies' disease specialist, or other appropriate individual/department, yearly to ensure the use of the most up to date CWD guidelines/protocols and testing facilities.

Approvals:

The Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Adaptive Management Oversight Committee approved this SOP on January 26, 2007.

References: None

Appendix A.

Note: To ensure that each road-kill salvaged by the Mexican Wolf Project is tested and that CWD results are verified, a tracking number should be recorded on the form below that corresponds to the Agency coordinating the tracking and testing.

Arizona Game and Fish Department and Arizona Department of Transportation

Wildlife Vehicle Collision Report

(Not a Salvage Permit)

Collision Information:

Collision Date ____ / ____ / ____ Time ____ am/pm ____ Unknown

Location: Road Name/Number _____ Nearest 1/10 Mile Post _____

Latitude ____ / ____ / ____ Longitude ____ / ____ / ____ (degrees, minutes, seconds)

or UTM _____ Datum: ____ Nad83, ____ Nad27, ____ Other _____

Cross Roads or Landmark _____ County _____

Direction of Travel: ____ Eastbound, ____ Westbound, ____ Southbound, ____ Northbound, ____ Unknown

Reporting Party Information:

Reporting Date _____ Time _____ am/pm

Agency: AGFD ADOT DPS County Citizen Other _____ Officer ID Number: _____

Name: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Animal Description:	Sex:	Animal Disposition:
Mule Deer	Male	Dead Salvage Permit # _____
Whitetail Deer	Female	Removed: By Who
Elk	Unknown	Marked Animal
Antelope	Age:	Left the Area
Turkey	Adult	Ear/Collar Tag # _____
Other	Juvenile	Dispatched: By Who
_____	Unknown	Investigated By

Multiple Animals: Report ____ of Total Reports ____ (one per animal)

Comments: _____ Form # 9084 9/04